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ABSTRACT

The El Paso (Texas) Independent School District's district-wide program in majority-language (English) immersion is examined to determine the source of its success. The program's similarities to and differences from the Canadian immersion model are explored. The program's superior results in comparison with the same district's transitional bilingual education programs are looked at in terms of James Cummins' discussions of bilingual education. It is concluded that the immersion program's superiority over the transitional programs can be explained largely in terms of its maximal use of English and its whole language approach. The bilingual immersion program approach is recommended not as a panacea, but as a superior educational alternative. A list of 79 references is included. (MSE)

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"'Provided There Is An Adequate Exposure to This L2 in the School and Environment and Sufficient Motivation to Learn It': The Applicability (at times pace Cummins) of Majority-Language Immersion Programs to Limited- or Non-English-Proficient Spanish-L1 Grade-School Populations in the United States-Mexican Border Area."*

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What most transitional bilingual education programs have in common is this: non- or limited-English proficient students are taught English as a Second language (ESL) during one class period or more on any given day, and are taught most or all their "content" subjects through the medium of the home language. This is what is broadly mandated in the various pieces of legislation both federal and state to be approved since the passing by Congress in 1968 of the Bilingual Education Act. Typical of state rules are those of Texas, as cited in the Texas Education Code (1982, 21.454, "Program Content: Method of Instruction," p. 164): to be established is "a full-time program of dual-language instruction that provides for learning basic skills in the primary language of the students of limited English proficiency who are enrolled in the program, and that provides for carefully structured and sequenced mastery of English language skills." Because of the limited flexibility--or perhaps outright contradition--set forth in the Texas Education Agency's (1982) Comprehensive Instruction guidelines (section 77.353, "Program Content; Method of Instruction," p. 453), it is not possible to speak of curricular uniformity in bilingual education programs in Texas let alone throughout the United States; thus according to the Texas Education Agency, bilingual education shall develop basic skills of comprehending, speaking, reading and writing in the student's primary language as well as in English, and

*This article is a revised version of the Presidential Address presented at the annual meeting of LASSO {Linguistic Association of the Southwest}, October, 1988.

"subject matter and concepts" shall be taught in the student's primary language as well as in English.

Enter Canadian immersion education (henceforth CIE), born, as is well known, in 1967 in the Montreal suburb of St. Lambert, whose anglophone parents were disturbed by the long-time failure of French FLES (Foreign Language in the Elementary School) to produce French-proficient offspring, and who in any event saw the proverbial handwriting on the wall, realizing that Quebec was rapidly headed toward de jure French monolingualism, and that without French, future generations could not earn a living in the province. CIE operates thus: All children in the program's first year (which can be kindergarten or later) arrive as monolinguals in the same home language (English in this instance). The teacher, who is bilingual though natively francophone, uses only the target language (French) for all classroom purposes both instructional and non-instructional, yet the children are allowed--indeed expected--to address the teacher in the home language until they are ready for spontaneous, self-generated oral production of the L2, which typically occurs in about a year. Aural comprehension occurs sooner--within three to four months--and, in fact, begins to occur from the very beginning, in that initial language use is highly contextualized, and can involve physical responses to teacher-generated requests.

At the heart of immersion education is the use of the target language as both medium of instruction and instructional text. At some point--for the St. Lambert students it was at the end of the second grade, i.e., the students' third year in the program--the home language is introduced as subject material. The St. Lambert experimentals were subjected from the outset to a wide battery of tests, and were compared on multiple measures with both monolingual anglophone youngsters following the same school district's English-medium curriculum and with monolingual francophone students following an analogous curriculum in an adjacent district. To sum up the St. Lambert program's voluminous empirical findings (see Lambert and Tucker 1972), replicated subsequently by scores of

districts throughout Canada from the early seventies onward, the immersion experimentals acquired French far more successfully than their older siblings ever had done through FLES; showed no deficit in the academic content areas (in particular math); and--despite initially depressed performance--showed no long-range deficit in their ability to read and write English. In sum, CIE represented a success story, at least through about grade five, when researchers such as Spilka (1976) began to note a leveling off in the students' progress in French, typified by fossilizing interlanguage--the so-called Plateau Effect, which subsequent work by Hammerly (1987) and others has confirmed remains operant all the way through the twelfth grade. The Plateau Effect would appear to result from the ethnolinguistically-segregated nature of Canadian society: though CIE students in those parts of Canada where anglophones potentially enjoy access to sizeable natively-francophone communities were being educated via French, the long-standing animosity between "the French" and "the English" in Canada (see for example Wardhaugh 1982) prevented English-Canadian parents from taking the final, logical step of enrolling their children in French-Canadian schools so that peer influence could take effect, eroding the interlanguage mold and giving rise to fully authentic Canadian French. But such was not to be. In any event, Plateau Effect or no, the French the immersion students speak is considerably better than the French the previous generations hardly ever learned.

Around the middle 1970s, when word of Canadian successes started filtering south, American educators unconvinced by or opposed to what I have already described as transitional bilingual education began to question whether the Canadian model could be applied here. In his voluminous writings on bilingual education and allied topics (see REFERENCES), the Irish-Canadian psychologist Jim[1] Cummins for the most part argues--especially in his earlier writings--against the possibility or the desirability of applying the Canadian immersion model to American classrooms serving limited- or non-English-proficient students, whom Cummins terms language minorities. Thus in Cummins 1978c:855 he states that while "Im-

mersion programs for majority language children have proved extremely successful, resulting in high levels of second language (L2) skills at no cost to first language (L1) skills," the "home-school language switch has been shown to result in low levels of achievement in both L1 and L2 in minority language children." In a discussion of his well-known "developmental interdependence" and "threshold" hypotheses, Cummins (1979c:243) insists that "for the child whose input conceptual-linguistic knowledge is not conducive to the development of literacy skills," the hypotheses imply that "initial instruction should be through the medium of L1." While Cummins admits subsequently (1981f:44) the existence of a variable--ambiental exposure to target language--whose ramifications he deals with elsewhere and which will be discussed later in the present paper, he continues to insist that any increased exposure to L2 must be postponed ("this increased exposure should not come in the early grades where the instructional emphasis should be on L1 in order to develop the conceptual apparatus required to make English context-reduced input comprehensible").

However as Cummins' own work evolved, and research findings from various programs were made manifest, Cummins increasingly admitted the possibility that some features of Canadian-style immersion education might be practicable in American language-minority school settings. A neutral, take-no-sides report on several types of U.S. immersion programs for non-anglomonomatriphones appears in Cummins 1983a:379-380. One year later (1984b:156), Cummins does not exclude adaptations of the Canadian model when he writes that "In light of the analysis of minority student underachievement presented in previous chapters, there appears to be little reason why such a 'genuine immersion' programme might not be successful. However, the relevance of sociocultural variables associated with student ambivalence vis-a-vis L1 and L2 suggests that there should be an L1 component from the beginning of the programme." (Themes such as language and cultural ambivalence along with increased emphasis on sociocultural variables are characteristic of Cummins' later work and will be discussed below.) The

same source offers up what could be termed a qualified endorsement of both majority and minority language immersion programs of the sort that a very small number of American school districts had cautiously begun to promote. Sounding a note of warning about transitional bilingual education programs that he develops elsewhere into a veritable symphony, Cummins writes: "That there be genuine sustained reinforcement of minority students' L1 (as opposed to its transitional use in most U.S. bilingual programmes) is probably ultimately more important than the specific amount of L1 instructional time (e.g., 80% in San Diego early grades, 20% in McAllen) or the language in which reading is introduced. The relative efficacy of majority language and minority language bilingual programmes is an empirical question at this point." (1984b:160) As the quote suggests, a majority-language bilingual (immersion) program is one which gives greater emphasis to the language of the national majority population (here English), while a minority-language bilingual program emphasizes the minority group's home and community language (here Spanish).

It is the purpose of the present paper to examine thoroughly a district-wide bilingual program in majority-language immersion, that of the El Paso Independent School District (henceforth EPISD); pinpoint that program's defects as well as its successes; explain why that program has so far been achieving superior results when compared to those of the control group's program; and attempt to explain these results in terms of Cummins' discussions of bilingual education. At present it is not possibile to respond to Cummins' suggestion that the relative efficacy of majority versus minority language bilingual programs serving similar populations be discussed, since no minority-language bilingual immersion program has been subjected to any significant empirical examination to date.[2] Instead, the EPISD's bilingual program in majority-language immersion will be compared with the same district's transitional bilingual education program.

What precisely is bilingual (majority-language) immersion, and how does it differ from both the Canadian-style immersion education as well as transitional

bilingual education described above? Answers to these questions along with the data presented here on the EPISD's bilingual immersion program (henceforth BIP) derive from the EPISD's Office for Research and Evaluation's Interim Report of the Five-Year Bilingual Education Pilot, 1986-87 School Year (henceforth Interim Report), issued in-house July 1987 in response to a request from the Texas Education Agency (TEA).[3]

Transitional bilingual education (henceforth TBE) allows for the possibility of teachers presenting content areas via the medium of the target language, but in practice (or at least in the EPISD) does not do so; instead, English is a subject matter only, taught for 60 minutes a day in grade one and 90 minutes a day subsequently; all other subjects are taught in Spanish. By contrast, the bilingual immersion program--BIP--uses mainly English as the medium of instruction for content subjects but makes a point of using what the Interim Report calls "comprehensible English," i.e., a context-embedded code, abounding in concrete referentiality. Students are not discouraged from responding in Spanish, though English responses are encouraged when the language of transmission is English. BIP does use some Spanish as a medium of instruction for content subjects from the very outset, and in that sense BIP differs from Canadian immersion education (CIE), where only the target language is used for that purpose initially. As is true of CIE, students are given daily instruction in Spanish language arts (reading and writing); the major difference between the two programs is that BIP offers Spanish language arts from the very outset, while CIE postpones L1 language arts until the end of grade two.

The Interim Report stresses that BIP should not be viewed as some sort of flip side of the TBE instructional coin; indeed, one is struck by the extent to which the difference between BIP and TBE is generational: TBE, conceived in the 1960s and first put into effect in El Paso around 1970 (though not expanded district-wide until 1977), is clearly the intellectual offspring of Spanish-English contrastive linguistics, a state-mandated course required since about

1970 of every candidate for bilingual certification in Texas. As the Interim Report notes, TBE focuses the child's attention contrastively on the details of language, i.e., phonetics and grammar rules, while BIP is inspired by that the report calls the Whole Language Approach, a reciprocal interactive system. BIP consciously seeks to contextualize both oral and written language and to use language in the classroom for authentic communicative purposes, or at least for purposes as authentically communicative as a classroom setting allows. There are three BIP components: English Language Arts (analogous in purpose if not methodology to the ESL component of TBE), Native Language Cognitive Development (where Spanish is consistently the medium and often the subject of instruction), and science, social studies and math as "sheltered content areas." ("Sheltered" means English-medium input that is deliberately reduced in complexity and abstractness, especially at the beginning; see for example Cummins 1979b). English Language Arts is taught for either 90 or 120 minutes per day, depending on the level of the students; the Interim Report states that the methods employed are Natural Approach, Total Physical Response, and other communicative orientations. Reading and writing are fostered through such interactive process strategies as Storytelling, Daily Journal Writing, and Group and Individual Publishing. Native Language Cognitive Development is offered for from 60 to 90 minutes per day; according to the Interim Report (1987:10), the "objective of this component is to develop concepts, literacy, cognition and critical thinking skills in Spanish. It is during this period that instruction and student-teacher interaction are entirely in Spanish. The more demanding content area concepts may also be introduced during Native Language Cognitive Development."

How well do BIP and TBE students test? Since Chapter 77 of the Texas Administrative Code (1982) calls for annual testing of all students identified as limited English proficient, including all those enrolled in the EPISD in either TBE or BIP, the Interim Report was able to present data from over a thousand

individuals, all of whom took the reading and language arts sections of the Iowa Tests of Basic Skills and the Oral Language Dominance Measure as well as "TEAMS," the Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills test. My reportage of test results will focus on grade three (the highest reached by BIP at time of testing), in part because not all grade one (and sometimes not all grade two) students are tested in all subjects for a variety of reasons. (Thus state law allows students whose language is so limited that they cannot take the test to be exempted from it.) In any event, it is the grade three scores that will be of greatest interest to us. Before reporting any test results I should make it clear that while I am in sympathy and essential agreement with the conclusions reached by my antepenultimate predecessor in this office, Carole Edelsky, in her 1985 LASSO presidential address "The Effect of 'Theory' on Theory--And Other Phenomena" (published in revised form as Edelsky 1984, and expanded upon as Edelsky et al. 1983), I admit I cannot argue with Cummins and Swain (1983:27) in their response to Edelsky et al. 1983 when they (C & S) state: " . . . we do not believe that the real world is sufficiently clear cut to dismiss all uses of standardized tests, under all conditions, for all students as 'irrelevant nonsense'." Cummins and Swain aptly point out that " . . . standardized tests can provide useful information under some conditions and for some students. For example, the spread of French immersion programs across Canada is due in no small measure to the repeated finding that students did not suffer {a decline in} English academic skills as measured by standardized norm-referenced tests." (Cummins and Swain 1983:28-29)

For those grade three students tested district-wide in March of 1987, the normal-curve-equivalent-based mean scores were higher for BIP students than for TBE students in all three subject areas of the English-medium Iowa Test (reading, language and math), though the BIP advantage was statistically significant only for reading and language, with the math means too close to call. It should be noted that both BIP and TBE scores were lowest in reading and

highest in language. The BIP mean scores exactly equalled the national average and the TBE scores fell five points below it.

The EPISD uses the Oral Language Dominance Measure as its oral language testing instrument in grades one through three; this test measures spoken language proficiency in both English and Spanish, and its scale ranges from a low of one to a high of five. It is on the English proficiency component that BIP students unequivocally outperform their TBE peers: in grade three, 74% of BIP students but only 56% of TBE students achieved the high score of five, and only 18% of BIP students versus 29% of TBEs scored between one and three, i.e., low. What about spoken language proficiency in Spanish? In grade one, 84% of BIP and 88% of TBE students achieved the highest scores, in grade two 96% and 98% respectively, and in grade three 97% of both cohorts did so. There is little if any difference then between BIP and TBE when it comes to maintaining and developing oral proficiency in Spanish; the TBEs may have a slightly higher score at first but the two groups perform at an equal--and an equally high--level by grade three.

Since 1979, school districts in Texas have been required by law to participate in a State-developed minimum basic skills testing program, whose current version is the TEAMS test referred to earlier. These are criterion-referenced tests, i.e., measurement instruments that relate test items to specific learning objectives or levels of proficiency in skills which students have been taught. EPISD students take TEAMS in grades 1, 3 and 5--this last not reported here since the BIP program had only entered its third year as of March 1987. Spanish versions of TEAMS for grades one and three were administered for the first time in that year. EPISD Language Proficiency Assessment Committees decided which students would take the Spanish version and which the English version. In grade three, 87% of the BIP students (n = 535) and 66% of the TBE students (n = 529) took the English TEAMS while only 13% BIP students (80) but 34% TBE students (268) took the Spanish teams. While the low number--both absolute

and relative--of BIP students taking the Spanish TEAMS may vitiate the validity of the comparisons, I will go ahead and present them anyway if only for their heuristic value.

Both groups did equally well on the English version of the TEAMS math test (80% mean mastery), and almost as well as the district mean (85%). While the BIP students' English reading scores (47% mastery) exceeded TBE students' (39%), and at statistical significance, the disparity between these levels of mastery and the mean district-wide non-bilingual-program mastery level--70%--bears thinking about. Similar concern can be shown about English writing scores: BIP 44% mastery, TBE 40% mastery, district-wide 65% mastery. On the Spanish version of the math test, the tables are turned (though again, bear in mind that the Spanish-version BIP cohort is small): BIP 74% mastery, TBE 87% mastery, state-wide bilingual program 79% mastery. (We can assume that "state-wide bilingual program" means "TBE elsewhere in Texas.") Thus in math in Spanish, the 80 BIP students undershot the state-wide mark by five percentage points and the 268 TBE students exceeded it by eight. In Spanish reading, both El Paso groups outperformed state means: TBE 97% mastery, BIP 89% mastery, and 86% state-wide mastery. Similar results are manifest in Spanish writing: 95% TBE mastery, 91% BIP mastery, and 86% state-wide mastery.

In general terms, the results from these three batteries of tests provide very suggestive evidence supporting several conclusions.

Conclusion number one appears commonsensical, and is not entirely gainsaid by Cummins despite his repeated opposition to what he terms the fallacy of the "maximum exposure assumption" (thus Cummins 1980c:51, 1984c:33, 1984:264-265): the more you are exposed to meaningful input in a language, the better you will do in it. BIP students did better--though in just one component to any statistical significance--on the Iowa tests, which are administered via English; unequivocally outperformed TBE students on the English portion of the Oral Language Dominance Measure; and did better at English writing and especially English

reading as measured by the TEAMS test. Only in the TEAMS test's English-version math exam did both groups do equally well on an English-medium test. But as the Interim Report (1987:61) notes, "BIP's success in mathematics is interesting in light of a major argument for {transitional bilingual education}: that content area instruction must be carried out in Spanish to ensure continuation of {content area} learning while English is being learned." Of course the argument works both ways: the fact that TBE students did as well as their BIP peers on an English-medium math exam has demonstrated that in math at least, knowledge acquired via the home language readily transfers into the target language. BIP students, then, are ahead of their TBE peers in English by whatever measurement, and have not fallen behind them in a crucial content area such as mathematics.

Conclusion number two is not surprising in light of what we have long known from the research on the products of Canadian immersion education: that BIP students' performance in L1 language arts (here Spanish) did not differ greatly from the performance of their TBE counterparts who, save for those 60 or 90 minutes a day of ESL, have been educated solely via the medium of the L2. By the third grade, the two groups' scores in Spanish oral proficiency are identical. Recall, however, that there is one important difference between Canadian-style immersion and El Paso-style BIP: that BIP students are given significant amounts of Spanish language arts from the very beginning of the program, and note that even this coursework did not enable BIP students to fully equal--let alone surpass--the TBE students on the Spanish-medium reading and writing sections of the TEAMS test; though the BIP scores were close, TBE scores lead. So if the goal of bilingual education is to produce students whose bilingualism is fully balanced in all four skills, then BIP is not quite adequate, and a certain amount of additional work both in and via Spanish may be needed.

The above conclusions constitute a corallary to Cummins in that they demonstrate the efficacy of an L1-inclusive majority-language immersion program in a setting such as El Paso, as Cummins in his later writings hypothesized might be

possible among language-minority students. Of course El Paso's language minority may not be what Cummins had in mind when he wrote of language minorities, since in El Paso, nearly 70% of the population is ethnically Hispanic, and perhaps an equal percentage of El Paso's Hispanics are Spanish-retentive and/or -preferent, whether as Spanish monolinguals, Spanish dominants, or balanced bilinguals. At any given moment, then, at least as much Spanish as English is being spoken throughout El Paso. Even more to the point, most of those neighborhoods whose schools offer BIP or TBE programs are Spanish-retentive, some strongly so. In a wider, national context, of course, Spanish is a minority language even in places like El Paso, yet from a local vantage point it is a very special kind of minority language.

It bears noting--and here we leave Cummins temporarily--that the goal of bilingual education in Texas at present is perfectly clear: to mainstream pupils into English-medium coursework. On this point, the laws of Texas are upon us; thus I quote from the Texas Education Code (21.451, Subchapter L, Bilingual Education and Special Language Programs, "State Policy"):

> Public schools are responsible for providing full opportunity for all students to become competent in speaking, reading, writing, and comprehending the English language. ... The legislature recognizes that the mastery of basic English language skills is a prerequisite for effective participation in the state's educational program. The legislature believes that bilingual education and special language programs can meet the needs of these students and facilitate their integration into the regular school curriculum. ... Bilingual education or special language programs as defined by this Act shall be taught {sic} in the public schools only for the purpose of assisting the learning ability of limited English proficiency students and to enhance the English language.

And there is more, elsewhere, along these same lines. Barring a radical change

in these laws--and I foresee none, at least not in the next three or four decades--the question perforcedly becomes: which of the EPISD's two programs--BIP or TBE--does the better job of preparing students for that all-important transition into the all-English schoolday? The El Paso interim data would indicate that BIP does so. BIP students make more progress in all facets of English in three years than TBE students--and equal progress in content areas--so BIP students will do better in the English-language classroom. While Cummins has argued forcefully (1980a:96 and elsewhere) that since research suggests that "'equality' of academic potential and performance is not attained {by language-minority students} until the later grades of elementary school . . . {therefore} the full benefit of bilingual instruction may not become apparent until the fifth or sixth year of instruction," it is nontheless counter-intuitive to assume that TBE students, demonstrably behind in English at the end of grade three, will have achieved parity with the products of BIP by grade five. Such at least is my prediction; suffice it to say that the results of the final EPISD report, due to be issued the summer of 1989 following the completion of grade five by both cohorts, are awaited with considerable interest.

That BIP does a better job than TBE is a position with which classroom teachers themselves agree. The EPISD distributed questionnaires to every BIP and TBE teacher in the appropriate grades throughout the district. Rate of response was remarkably high, as 280 TBE teachers (84%) and 231 BIP teachers (86%) returned filled-out questionnaires. In general, BIP teachers viewed their programs much more positively than did TBE teachers theirs. (It should be noted that almost without exception, teachers in the EPISD's bilingual programs are bilingual native hispanophones themselves.) The questionnaire contained ten statements--two modified to reflect the two programs' differing realities, one deleted from the BIP questionnaire altogether--with which the respondents were to agree or disagree on a six-point scale (though for the purpose of tabulation, "disagree" ratings one and two and "agree" ratings

five and six were colapsed into single categories). Thus 60% of BIP versus only 40% of TBE instructors agreed that "Most students will succeed in the regular program after they complete" the program now enrolled in, and 20% of TBE versus only 7% of BIP instructors disagreed with that statement. Remarkable discrepancy exists between the two groups' reactions to a statement about whether each one's program "notivates students to learn English": 75% of the BIP versus only 36% of the TBE faculty agreed theirs does, and 32% of the TBE instructors felt that their program does not so motivate. A highly analogous statement--the program "successfully develops students' oral English skills"--drew nearly identical responses: 74% BIP vs. only 37% of the TBE faculty agreed, and a substantial 28% of the TBE faculty (vs. only 5% of the BIP faculty) disagreed. The two groups were almost equal in their response to the statement "The program develops and maintains students' Spanish language skills" (59% TBE and 60% BIP agreement); only small percentages--7% TBE, 4% BIP faculty--disagreed with this statement. Similar near-equality reigned in faculty responses to the following: the program "is successful in teaching children to read in" Spanish (if TBE) or English (if BIP). Since the BIP program's children read in English from the very outset, only TBE instructors were asked to respond to the following statement: "Most students in the program successfully transfer to reading in English"; 36% agreed, 22% felt they did not, and the plurality (42%) neither agreed nor disagreed. Substantive differences were also revealed in responses to three more statements: "This program motivates students to read and enjoy stories" (BIP 79% agreement and 3% disagreement, TBE 57% agreement and 14% disagreement); this program "successfully develops students' grammar, punctuation and spelling skills" (BIP 65% agreement and 11% disagreement, TBE 44% agreement and 22% disagreement); and this program "encourages students to positively identify with their cultural heritage" (BIP 64% agreement and 7% disagreement, TBE 63% agreement and 13% disagreement). The lower level of teacher enthusiasm for TBE as manifested in responses to

this last statement is especially striking, since TBE's all-Spanish-in-the-content-areas curriculum was clearly intended to produce precisely the effect stated: positive identification with the home language's cultural heritage. Equally striking is TBE faculty response to the last of the ten statements ("Students in the program benefit from being taught the content areas in Spanish"): a very bare majority (51%) agreed, while slightly more than one out of five (21%) disagreed, and 28% neither agreed nor disagreed. It should be noted at this point that the overwhelming majority of the teachers in the EPISD's bilingual programs received their training in the University of Texas at El Paso's College of Education, all of whose bilingual education faculty have long supported transitional bilingual education with vocal enthusiasm, and that if there is one concept which is central to the core of that program, it is that students benefit from being taught the content areas in Spanish. (By way of contrast, 83% of BIP instructors agreed that students in their program "benefit from being taught the content areas in English" and only 3% disagreed.)

None of these findings concerning the superior performance of BIP students on standardized tests and the teachers' perceptions of BIP as superior to TBE should be surprising to the reader of Cummins, since by 1980 Cummins had reached the conclusion that "the psychoeducational assumptions underlying transitional programs are largely invalid." (1980a:83) Cummins bases this assertion on two considerations: the invalidity of what Cummins terms the "linguistic mismatch" hypothesis, and the strong likelihood that "the educational benefits of bilingual education may be cumulative, and thus, aborting the program at an early stage is unlikely to realize these benefits." (ibid.) The second of these considerations will not be dealt with here, all the more so because none of the students from either program had been exited from it at time of testing (and would not, indeed, be exited until the end of the fifth grade). The first consideration--the linguistic mismatch hypothesis--is based on the seemingly logical assumption that children will only learn well if they are instructed

via the language they already know well, i.e., L1, an assumption given considerable impetus by the oft-cited 1953 UNESCO report (UNESCO 1953). Cummins argues that considerable research findings have invalidated linguistic mismatch as a general tenet; prominent among the findings are the conclusions drawn from Canada's immersion programs: their products have acquired (along with French) a course-content mastery that invariably equals or exceeds that achieved by the student in the English-medium control group. Thus linguistic mismatch i.e. home-school language switch alone can no longer be used as the prime let alone the sole justification of bilingual education.

While the conclusion to be drawn from my analysis so far is that the superiority of BIP over TBE can be explained largely in terms of BIP's maximal use of English versus TBE's minimal use of it, one cannot overlook the strong likelihood that the context of English exposure in BIP--the reciprocal interactive "Whole Language Approach" referred to earlier--is at least as important a predictive factor as is the fact of greater exposure itself. By 1983, Cummins had begun to speak frequently of the importance of comprehensible input ("Language acquisition is largely dependent on students receiving sufficient comprehensible input in the target language" (1983a:373)) and to cite the works of Stephen Krashen often. Underlying the principle of comprehensible input "is the importance of meaningful communication. When this central language function is ignored in classroom instruction, learning is likely to be by rote and supported only by extrinsic motivation." (Cummins 1983a:377) Cummins speaks directly to the superiority of programs such as BIP when he notes that the contrast between "immersion and traditional second-language programs can be interpreted within the framework of the comprehensible input principle in that communication between teacher and students in the immersion program is embedded in a meaningful concrete context and supported by a wide range of paralinguistic cues which allow students to infer the intended meaning and simultaneously acquire the second language. This, however, is not the case in traditional

second-language programs which tend to emphasize language drills in isolation from authentic communication." (1983a:378) Reference to the importance of reciprocal interactive L2 facilitation is found elsewhere throughout Cummins' more recent writings (1981f:14, 1983b:112-113 and 125, 1984b:114 and 224-225, 1984f:67). Only by factoring out one of the two probable determinants of BIP's success--on the one hand the higher degree of exposure to English, on the other hand BIP's use of a reciprocal interactive approach to learning versus TBE's more traditional pedagogy--could this issue be clarified. In 1983 Cummins noted that "virtually no research information is available on the effects of monolingual immersion for minority students" (1983a:379), and this is precisely the type of information we would need in order to determine which aspect of BIP accounted for its success or whether both aspects of the program were equally responsible for the superiority of its results.

I have already noted that the overwhelming reality of American bilingual education is its intent to serve as a transition to "mainstream" education via English. At least by the time the initially hispanomonomatriphonic youngster who began a bilingual program in kindergarten or first grade reaches grade seven (and often before), he or she is expected to have mastered enough English to handle a program whose content areas are taught solely in that language. While recalling that at least in the EPISD the product of whichever bilingual program--BIP or TBE--is exempted from entering the mainstream classroom until grade seven if necessary if his or her command of English is still judged inadequate, I am nonetheless bothered by the scores achieved by BIP and TBE students alike on the grade three TEAMS tests of English reading and writing.

It will be recalled that while BIPs achieved a 47 percentile and thereby did better than TBEs, who only achieved a reading score of 39, the district as a whole, i.e., those 3,860 students participating in the English version of the TEAMS reading test in grade three, achieved a 70 percentile average. If we break down the reading test score into its component parts, we note that

the district-wide score particularly outdistances the BIP and the TBE scores in the areas of "sight words," "context clues" and "predicting outcomes," that is, in the realm of general comprehension as opposed to mechanics ("phonics," "table of contents" and the like). Scores from the grade three TEAMS writing test (English version) are similarly disturbing. The BIP advantage almost disappears (44th percentile as opposed to a TBE 40th percentile), and neither group even approaches the district-wide percentile, which is 65. Again, the differences are at their most evident in global activities; thus on "passing score on paragraph," i.e., a free composition exercise which required students to generate original language rather than manipulate prepared language, BIP students scored 54, TBE students 50, and district-wide 75; differences between the three groups on "proofreading," "spelling," "punctuation," "capitalization" and the like were minimal by comparison.

It is not for nothing that BIP is an immersion program. Like the products of Canadian immersion in French, El Paso hispanomonomatriphones in English BIP score noticeably better in English and on tests using English than their "English FLES" TBE counterparts, but not as well as native speakers of the target language. Like the Canadian immersion students, the El Paso BIPs are in effect isolated from peer groups which are monolingual in the target language, and while the Canadian analogy begins to break down at this point at least partially, the linguistic consequences are similar. The chief difference between the two situations is that for reasons based as much on class as on ethnicity, the average El Paso hispanomonomatriphonic child typically lacks access to social networks that are monolingual in English, while the typical Anglo-Canadian does not take advantage of the access putatively available. In El Paso, "neighborhood" is the chief determinant of language choice (see Teschner 1981): some neighborhoods--not surprisingly those where hispanophones enjoyed primacy of settlement, or where Hispanics constitute almost a totality of the population--are simply known as "Spanish-speaking," and social pressures insure that Hispan-

ics from outside those neighborhoods speak Spanish when visiting them, whether Spanish is or is not the outsiders' preferred or dominant language. When engaged in commercial or social activity outside the Spanish-bastion areas, their residents readily find fellow Hispanics to interact with, and in Spanish. This is not to make the claim that in El Paso, all intra-Hispanic interaction takes place exclusively in Spanish, or that the majority of El Paso Hispanics are monolingual in that language. On the contrary, shift to English is taking place; yet immigration from Mexico is also proceeding apace. What characterizes El Paso then is a steady-state bilingualism manifesting a slow shift to English dominance and/or preference (though almost never English monolingualism), alongside a steady influx of monolingual hispanophones and a constant level of overall <u>societal</u> Spanish dominance and/or preference. In effect, for every Hispanic who shifts to English dominance and/or preference, a monolingual hispanophone is added to the population, particularly in certain neighborhoods, which brings us back to the point at issue: the degree to which an immersion program or for that matter <u>any</u> program can provide the child of certain neighborhoods, certain backgrounds with the meaningful exposure that he or she needs to achieve parity on English-medium test scores--not to mention (following Edelsky) all those far-more relevant activities inside school and out--with those "district-wide" students whose home-language circumstances or neighborhoods of residence have enabled them to bring proficient English to school from the outset, whether they also speak Spanish or not.

I have long maintained (see Teschner 1980, 1981, 1982, 1983, Parisi and Teschner 1984) that, paradoxically, in an area where bilingualism is both profuse and steady-state, i.e., not accompanied by wide-scale shift, individual acquisition of the area's second language is typically problematic: because there is always someone around who speaks your primary language, incentives to become proficient in the other tongue are correspondingly reduced. Not that for our children in BIP and TBE programs these incentives are lack-

ing altogether. A 1982 UTEP masters thesis survey (Hammersmith 1982) shows that what amounts to a totality of parents of children in El Paso's bilingual programs--TBE only at the time--want their offspring to learn English, and fully expect that the schools will achieve that goal. Yet--the survey reveals--few if any of these parents speak English at home or expect that their children will become anglicized; indeed, they are confident that their children will remain as loyal to language, class and culture as they themselves have been. Once again we are in Canada, mutatis mutandis, save for the not-inconsiderable differences in social class between the two populations. Which brings us una vez encore to the central question, restated somewhat in light of what I have just discussed: can the task of producing proficient bilinguals be a school task alone? Obviously this question is rhetorical, though only in part. In some El Paso neighborhoods, the products of BIP and even TBE will experience integration--eventually or even rapidly--into a peer population which is English-preferent, -dominant, or -monolingual. In other neighborhoods, the products of bilingual schooling are likely to remain segregated or largely so, either because they live in public housing projects (always prone to ostracism and self-ostracization), or because the neighborhood is both historically and statistically Spanish-monolingual or nearly so.

The quote that appears in the title of the present paper has been taken from Housen and Baetens Beardsmore (1987:87). By placing such a caveat in such a prominent position I do not mean to imply that Cummins is unaware of the importance of adequate exposure to the L2 in school and environment, along with sufficient motivation to learn it. Such is not the case. In any early explanation of his developmental interdependence hypothesis, for example, Cummins explicitly cites environmental sufficiency as a necessary variable (" . . . instruction is effective in promoting CALP which will manifest itself in both languages given adequate motivation and exposure to both languages either in school or wider environment . . . Thus, the relationships . . . presuppose motivational in-

volvement and adequate exposure to L1 and/or L2." (1979a:202)). Similar sentiments appear in Cummins 1980a:88 and 90, 1980b:185, 1984b:100 ("For example, minority children are unlikely to perform adequately in English if exposure to English has been minimal"), 1984b:265 (" . . . students instructed for much of the day through a minority language will perform at least as well in English academic skills as equivalent students instructed totally through English, given adequate motivation to learn English and sufficient exposure to the language either within or outside school"), and 1984c:33. The problem is that Cummins not infrequently makes assumptions elsewhere which easily lend themselves to misinterpretation or what appears to be an outright dismissal of the environmental/motivational caveat, sometimes by Cummins himself, as quotes from Cummins earlier in this paper have shown (1979c:243, 1981f:44). Thus the explicit assumption in 1980b:185 ("Because the majority language is the language of the streets and of T.V. there is usually no lack of exposure or motivation to acquire it"), the patently site-specific conclusion which explains away the findings of a Toronto study ("Bhatnager (1980) reports that immigrant students who used L1 exclusively with parents and siblings also performed significantly worse than those who used both L1 and L2. However, it seems likely that this finding can be attributed to the fact that only those students who had immigrated relatively recently would use L1 exclusively" (1981f: 33, emphasis added)), the assumption contained in 1984b:158 (" . . . the appropriate implication from the Canadian immersion data is that the language whose development is most likely to be neglected (i.e. the minority or subordinate language) should be strongly promoted in the school programme in order to produce an additive form of bilingualism" (emphasis added)), and the unexamined assumptions made by McLaughlin 1984-85 and restated uncritically by Wesche (1987:76) in her review of McLaughlin, who, "in the context of his discussion of why Canadian immersion models are not appropriate for minority language children . . . proposes 'reverse immersion' for children who come to school

without English skills. In this model the weaker (first) language would be taught almost exclusively during the primary years, while oral second (English) language skills would initially be absorbed on the playground and in activities requiring little English proficiency . . . " (How is it possible to speak of L1 as the weaker language in children who come to school without any L2?)

The chief problem with Cummins here is an entirely understandable Canado-centrism, which has prompted him on more than one occasion to forget the advice that he himself had given in an early publication (Cummins and Gulutsan 1974: 261): " . . . each bilingual education project must be planned according to the needs of the particular area in which it is located . . . " Thus what is valid for a presumably bilingual-by-first-grade groups of francophone students in Winnipeg, an English-dominant city in a markedly English-dominant region (Hébert 1976, as cited in Cummins 1979c and elsewhere) cannot be assumed as valid for all alloglots everywhere, and is demonstrably not valid for the typical LEP or NEP hispanophone El Paso six year old. As Wong-Fillmore has noted, one cannot take "street" acquisition for granted: "'Contrary to the usual assumption that children learn language mainly from peers outside the classroom and not from teachers, it appears that for many LEP students the only place in which they come into regular contact with English speakers is at school. Thus, language learning, if it is going to take place at all, is going to have to happen at school. (p. 19 {of Gass and Madden 1985})"(Scarcella and Perkins 1987:350). Wong-Fillmore leaves unanswered the degree to which "playground" acquisition can be predicted, as well she might, given the vast host of variables attendant thereunto: ratio of Lx-monolingual to Ly-monolingual children and degree and stability of bilingualism; nature of the relationship between speakers of Lx and Ly in the narrower and wider communities; stability of Lx/Ly settlement in that community (i.e., how rapidly is the neighborhood changing?); expectations regarding the direction of language shift if any; social class and its relationship to expected patterns of communication--in short, the entire

gamut of topics investigated by ethnographers and sociolinguists.

In school/community settings typified by considerable degrees of isolation, the magic of immersion education is hard-pressed to work--to the extent that the immersion classroom alone can be counted on to produce much more than a mere approximation of the target language (see for example Hammerly 1987 and my own discussion below). This paper has sounded this theme before and will now examine it in greater depth.

Until recently, Cummins' own writings took the unqualified or near-unqualified success of Canadian immersion education (CIE) as a given, to be referred to in passing as an example of the easy feasibility of home-school language switch at least for majority-language children (see for example 1984b:13). His first admission that Canadian anglomonomatriphones' command of French might be less than had been thought came in 1983, when he admits that "In terms of French achievement, by grade 6 students' oral and written receptive skills are close to those of native speakers. However, although they are fluent, their productive skills are not native-like." (1983a:375) It was not until 1986 that Cummins (writing with Merrill Swain) fully credited the degree to which adequate interactive exposure to the L2 is necessary for the alloglot to become proficient in it. In a discussion of differences between native speakers and CIE students, Cummins and Swain write that these

> . . . were highly significant on most grammatical measures and on those discourse and sociolinguistic measures where grammatical knowledge was essential for the production of correct linguistic forms. Additionally, it has been found that early immersion students approach native-speaker levels of proficiency in French reading and listening measures {i.e., in receptive skills} by the end of elementary school but significant differences remain with respect to oral and written {i.e., productive} grammatical skills . . . " (1986:209)

Why, the authors ask, do "immigrant students attain proficient L2 grammatical

skills within a relatively short time whereas French immersion students continue to experience difficulty in these areas?" (Swain and Cummins 1986:211) The answer is a logical extension of their findings anent exposure: "The same hypothese appear relevant to this phenomenon. Immigrant students tend to gain peer-appropriate grammatical skills, at least in the oral modality, considerably more rapidly than is the case for immersion students precisely because their contact with and use of the L2 is far greater." (ibid.) In the El Paso context, "provided that" rather than "because" would appear to be the more appropriate conjunctive element--"'provided that' their contact with and use of the L2 is far greater (or sufficient)."

Recent publications by Canadians give the distinct impression that CIE is undergoing considerable reevaluation. Though Swain and Lapkin (1986) continue to emphasize the positive aspects of CIE even as they note the negative, a half-dozen other researchers have come down increasingly hard on CIE for producing just the sort of graduates who "continue to experience difficulty" in French production after thousands and thousands of hours of classroom exposure; thus Adiv (1980), Lister (1987), Pawley (1985), Pellerin and Hammerly (1986), Singh (1986), and in particular Hammerly (1987), who continued Spilka (1976)'s pioneering examination of the oral production of French immersion students. Hammerly goes so far as to state that CIE is "linguistically . . . a failure" and that it reveals "irremediable problems" (Hammerly 1987:399).

It is clear from the works just cited as well as (more importantly for our immediate purposes) Cummins and Swain themselves that classroom settings alone cannot be expected to produce BICS (Basic Interpersonal Communicative Skills) though they are capable of developing CALP (Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency). I have deliberately employed these dichotomizing acronyms, which Cummins himself has now abandoned (in favor of "context-embedded" and "context-reduced"--see 1983b:125 et alibi), so as to draw attention to the changes in the way that Cummins views the acquisition of the ability to talk with peers,

among other activities (as opposed to perform on tests, etc.). Whereas the early Cummins gave the impression that BICS essentially developed by itself, given proper exposure and motivation, by 1980 Cummins states that " . . . in an L2 context, where proficiency is as yet inadequately developed, a wider range of interpersonal communicative tasks are cognitively demanding than in an L1 context" (1980c:31-32), and three years later is cited (in John Oller's introduction to Cummins' contribution to the former's volume on testing) as explicitly recognizing that "'face-to-face activities can be cognitively demanding, i.e., require inference etc.' (Cummins, personal communication . . .)." (1983b: 108) Under conditions of social isolation from monomatriphonic speakers of the majority language, "BICS" acquisition may take longer than the time Cummins has posited, on the basis of his Toronto findings, as Wald (1984:61) points out in a commentary on Cummins' hypotheses:

> The claim that second language fluency is generally achieved in one and a half to two years does not correspond to the behavioral characteristics observed for 10-12 year old Mexican American children in the Los Angeles area. Quite generally, it has been found that students of less than four to five years residence in an English-speaking {sic?} environment preferred Spanish in spontaneous conversation, and have difficulty in competing for the floor in English with age-mates of earlier ages of arrival . . .

As we know from Swain (1983 {as reported on by Housen and Baetens Beardsmore 1987:89}, from whom I quote at length as befits the importance of the commentary, "comprehensible input, or the i + 1 hypothesis alone, is insufficient for the acquisition of high levels of L2 proficiency, based on results obtained on Canadian grade 6 immersion pupils," who had--using Cummins' early terminology--"acquired CALP" quite nicely but lacked important aspects of BICS (again to oversimplify).

> These subjects performed satisfactorily on subject matter tests and

> consequently must have understood what was taught through the L2, which suggests that it is not input per se that is important to L2 acquisition, but input that occurs in interaction where meaning is negotiated. With immersion pupils, input is derived mainly from listening to teacher talk, so the less than native-like grammatical competence can only be accounted for by the inadequacy of the input hypothesis. On the other hand, Swain claims that output fulfills a vital role in the process of L2 acquisition in that it enables the acquirer to apply the available linguistic resources in a meaningful way. This pushes the acquirer toward the delivery of a message that is conveyed as precisely, coherently, and appropriately as possible, enabling experimentation with target language structures by trial and error. Further, output forces the acquirer to pay equal attention to semantic and syntactic features, whereas the decoding of input allows for meaning to be derived from a combination of linguistic and extra-linguistic cues without any necessary focus on structure. {Immersion students} are limited in output because the wider environment does not sufficiently push the speaker in the active use of the L2. Nor do immersion children get much opportunity to interact with native-speaker peers of the target language.

While ambiental conditions among BIP students in El Paso and similar settings do not constitute exact replicas of conditions in Canada as these inform the conclusions of Swain and others, an analogy can nonetheless be made. In the BIP El Paso context one must speak of wider environments, plural: on the one hand a wider environment of family, friends and neighbors with whom the L1 (Spanish) is patently the expected medium of communication, and on the other hand a wider environment that consists of both the immediate expectations of the school system and the future expectations of the wider society--these latter however diluted by the obvious presence of Spanish as in some respects a co-equal "public"

language for significant numbers of adult Hispanics in places like El Paso and elsewhere. The point is that though environmental pressures toward English are certainly stronger in the BIP El Paso context than they are toward French among immersion students in, say, Vancouver, Edmonton or Winnipeg, they are not as strong as are similar pressures toward English among the immigrant students of Toronto with whom Cummins is most familiar. As is so often the case in sociolinguistics, we are dealing not with a dichotomy but with a continuum.

At this point in my analysis the temptation is strong to follow intuition ("common sense") and recommend that BIP--let alone TBE--be replaced by what Cummins has described as monolingual majority-language immersion programs "which take into account the need to provide minority students with modified second-language input but which dispense with bilingual teachers and first-language literacy promotion." (1983a:379) While I do not deny that the empirical findings form such a program in El Paso would be of considerable interest to researchers, nor the possibility that an MIP (monolingual immersion program) might prove a not-unattractive educational alternative under certain circumstances, I nevertheless agree with Cummins' conclusion that for some types of alloglottic grade-school populations, an L1 component is a critical necessity. Cummins advocates the inclusion of L1 in the curriculum on two grounds: first, that the developmental interdependence and the threshold hypotheses predict that cognitive growth in L2 is contingent upon continued cognitive development in L1 (and vice versa), and, second, that "An examination of global trends in the educational achievement of minority language children suggest that the groups who perform poorly in school are those who have been discriminated against economically and educationally and, as a consequence, are characterized by insecurity in relation to their own language and culture and ambivalence towards the dominant language and culture of the society . . . " (1984a:64) Of the two arguments I find the second the far more compelling, not only because of the doubts that Martin-Jones and Romaine (1986) and others have cast on the feasibility of

subjecting a developmental interdependence hypothesis to empirical examination as a single variable, but--and in larger part--because of what Cummins himself has had to say on the utility of the distinction between additive and subtractive bilingualism as interrelated with certain variables among minority language populations; thus while (1984a:64)

> The distinction between additive and subtractive bilingualism is useful in delineating a gross difference between bilingual acquisition contexts . . . the distinction fails to explain the very large differences in educational performance between groups of minority language children in subtractive situations. Not all groups of minority language children perform poorly at school; in fact, studies carried out by the Toronto Board of Education . . . show that, with the exception of children whose mother tongue is French, minority language children who were born in Canada tended to have higher academic achievement and were more likely to be in high academic streams than unilingual children, born in Canada, whose mother tongue was English. ... However, for groups of minority children such as the French in Ontario . . . , the Finns in Sweden, and Hispanic and Indian children in North America, substantial deficits in educational achievement have been reported. These findings cannot be wholly accounted for by the notion of subtractive bilingualism since the minority language children in the Toronto Board of Education studies are also in subtractive situations.

So there are minority language children and minority language children, and in this sense Cummins makes thoughtful use of John Ogbu's tripartite classification of minority groups into "autonomous," "immigrant" and "caste" minorities (Cummins 1984e:82): though the last of these may indeed be mostly immigrant in origin, as is the case for example with Mexican-Americans, they are best classified as a "caste" minority for reasons social and historical. What Cummins means by

"ambivalence towards the dominant language" is--in pop psych terms--that the alloglottic caste minoritarian is involved in a like/dislike, or love/hate, or push/pull relationship with the particular L2: it is the widely-accepted language necessary for economic advancement but it is also the language of the historical enemy, etc. The world abounds in such situations and they need not be delved into further here. Suffice it to say that in a program such as BIP, one can envision the presence as authority figure (teacher) of a fellow allophonic though bilingual ethnic as serving to validate the presence of the ambivalently-viewed L2 as the primary medium of instruction, all the more so since this same authority figure also validates the heretofore insecurely-viewed L1 by using it as a medium of instruction as well.

Attitudinal considerations, then, convince me that the L1 component is necessary to the EPISD's immersion program for hispanomonomatriphonic students and under similar conditions in the United States and elsewhere, just as the relative superiority of the Bilingual Immersion Program's test results has convinced me that in settings such as El Paso where the minority language enjoys considerable strength and salience, some form of majority-language immersion is preferable both to transitional bilingual education and minority-language immersion, which do not provide an adequate basis for accessing a language that is socially remote to greater or lesser degrees, and, thus, for the inevitable transition to instruction through the majority language exclusively. My advocacy of BIP, however, should not be construed as an insistence that this program as presently constituted represents the best of all possible schooling worlds. Instead, BIP represents a superior educational alternative, a step on the road to a better education, but not a panacea.

NOTES

[1]Between 1974 and ca. 1980, Cummins' publications almost always list his first name as James, but since then it has usually appeared as Jim. The present paper's Bibliography has not sought to follow these shifts.

[2]Torrance et al. 1982's statistical analysis and testing program are minimal at best and could not serve as an adequate basis for comparison with the EPISD's or any other district's program. I am obligated to Tim Allen, Director {though not until after 1982}, Second Language Education, San Diego City Schools, for sending me a copy of Torrance et al. 1982 and discussing various curricular matters with me over the phone.

[3]My thanks go to Ken Thomas, Associate Superintendent for Curriculum, EPISD, and the staff members of the Office for Research and Evaluation, EPISD. for providing me with a copy of the report.

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